

SUPPLEMENTAL PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT
USSN 09/673,143

REMARKS

By this Amendment, claims 1, 8, 9 and 11 are amended, and new claims 13-17 are added. Therefore, claims 1-17 are pending in the present application. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection, and allowance of the claims.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the courtesies extended to Applicant's representatives during the June 20, 2002 personal interview, the contents of which are incorporated herein. In accordance with the results of the personal interview, Applicant has amended claim 11 to place the method claim in proper independent form. Therefore, claim 11 is not believed to be a narrowing amendment.


Further, Applicant has amended claims 1, 8 and 9 in accordance with the results of the personal interview. Applicant has also added new claims 13-17 directed to additional disclosed features of the present invention. As noted previously, claims 10 and 12 contain allowable subject matter.

In view of the foregoing amendments and the remarks presented herein and previously discussed in the personal interview, Applicant respectfully submits that the cited art of record fails to disclose or suggest all of the claimed combinations of features, for at least the reasons already made of record, and those discussed during the personal interview. For example, but not by way of limitation, Applicant respectfully submits that the cited art fails to disclose or suggest the recited nanocomposite structure.

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Entry and consideration of this Amendment are respectfully requested. Further, if additional questions remain, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner contact Applicant's representatives to expedite prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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APPENDIX

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

The claims are amended as follows:

1. (Three times amended) A power cable comprising:

a conductive material core; and

at least one covering layer, characterized in that said at least one covering layer is constituted essentially of a material comprising an inorganic compound [having an exfoliated layered structure] made from a nanocomposite material and an organic compound [inserted]positioned between layers of said inorganic compound.

8. (Three times amended) A power cable according to claim 1, wherein the at least one covering layer comprises an insulative material layer constituted essentially of a nanocomposite material comprising an inorganic compound [having an exfoliated layered structure] and an organic compound [inserted]positioned between the layers of said inorganic compound.

9. (Three times amended) A power cable according to claim 1, wherein the at least one covering layer comprises an external covering layer constituted essentially of a nanocomposite material comprising an inorganic compound [having an exfoliated layered structure] and an organic compound [inserted]positioned between the layers of said inorganic compound.

11. (Amended) A method of fabricating at least one conductive layer of a power cable [according to claim 1]having a conductive core, [including the production of said material by]comprising the following steps:

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[-] treating [said]layers of an inorganic compound with an agent to render [it]said inorganic compound compatible with [said]an organic compound[,];

[- mixing the treated inorganic compound with]inserting said organic compound between said layers of said inorganic compound at a temperature higher than the temperature at which said organic compound softens or melts[,]to exfoliate said inorganic compound; and

[-] obtaining [said]a material with said organic compound inserted between the layers of said inorganic compound.

Claims 13-17 are added as new claims.

--13. (New) The method of claim 11, wherein said material comprises a nanocomposite structure.--

--14. (New) The method of claim 11, wherein said material has a particle size equal to 1 nanometer.--

--15. (New) The method of claim 11, wherein the at least one covering layer comprises at least one semiconductor screen, characterized in that the at least one semiconductor screen is constituted essentially of a material comprising an inorganic compound having an exfoliated layered structure and an organic compound inserted between the layers of said inorganic compound.--

--16. (New) The power cable of claim 1, wherein said inorganic compound is clay and an agent that makes said inorganic compound compatible with said organic compound is chosen from a quaternary ammonium salt, and an oxide of polyethylene and a phosphorus-containing derivative.--

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--17. (New) The power cable of claim 1, wherein the at least one covering layer comprises:

an insulative material layer constituted essentially of a nanocomposite material comprising an inorganic compound having an exfoliated layered structure and an organic compound inserted between the layers of said inorganic compound; and

an external covering layer constituted essentially of said nanocomposite material.--